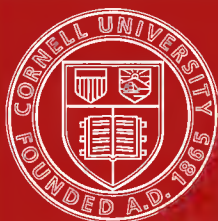


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LAND GRANT IN WISCONSIN

HEARINGS

BEFORE

THE COMMITTEE ON THE PUBLIC LANDS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 1912



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LAND GRANT IN WISCONSIN.

COMMITTEE ON THE PUBLIC LANDS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Wednesday, January 10, 1912.

The committee met at 10.30 o'clock a. m.

Present: Representatives Graham (acting chairman), Taylor, Raker, Wickersham, Claypool, George, Maher, Mondell, Ferris, Dent, Godwin, Rubey, Volstead, Pickett, and Morgan.

After consideration of other matters, H. R. 13417, Sixty-second Congress, by Mr. Morse of Wisconsin, was taken up for consideration and hearing.

The CHAIRMAN. Congressman Morse, of Wisconsin, is here, and desires to be heard on H. R. 13417. I think the committee work is now in such shape that he can be heard.

STATEMENT OF HON. ELMER A. MORSE, A MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM WISCONSIN.

Mr. MORSE. Mr. Chairman, that is a bill granting to the State of Wisconsin some islands in the little inland lakes in northern Wisconsin. The State of Wisconsin has a forest-reserve area of 475,000 acres, the third in size of any State in the Union—owned by the State, of course. The islands are now owned by the General Government. They are small, not adapted to agriculture, and for that reason have not been taken up under the homestead law. They are in these little inland lakes, and the State has purchased most of the land around these lakes and is now using it.

Mr. FERRIS. What is the total acreage?

Mr. MORSE. Mr. Griffith, our State forester, will give you that. It is very small.

Mr. GODWIN. What do you propose to pay for them?

Mr. MORSE. We do not propose to pay anything for them.

Mr. GODWIN. What are they worth?

Mr. MORSE. Mr. Griffith can give you better information on that than I. I am just going to state what the bill is.

Mr. GEORGE. Is there not timber on those islands?

Mr. MORSE. Yes.

Mr. GEORGE. Good timber?

Mr. MORSE. Some of it is good timber, but the acreage is very small. Now we have purchased all of this land excepting 20,000 acres given us by the General Government some time ago. The State of course is policing and taking care of this land, and one of the main reasons why we want to get possession of the islands is this: The Interior

Department has held the matter up for three or four years while this bill has been pending—

Mr. GODWIN. What do you want with them?

Mr. MORSE. We want to include them within our forest reserve. One of the great reasons for wanting to get title is this: We are creating there in northern Wisconsin, in the lake region, a magnificent forest reserve. We have passed a bill whereby the State is damming up the outlet of the lakes and using the water for water-power purposes; that is, letting it back up during high water and letting it out during low water. That is one reason why we want them, but the main reason is this: If those islands go into private ownership, as they have in some instances, people get possession of them, establish saloons and houses of ill repute in the islands, and in this way practically ruin our great forest reserve.

Mr. RAKER. Are they not valuable for anything else?

Mr. MORSE. Not very valuable for anything except summer-resort purposes. The bill provides that we can not sell them; we have got to keep them as a forest reserve. It is utterly impossible for us to police that great park unless the State owns those islands. The fact is that people from all over the Nation are coming there. We are establishing a great national park, not only for the people of Wisconsin, but for the people of other States as well.

Mr. FERRIS. I am not acquainted with the geography of your State at all. Are the islands all within the boundaries of Wisconsin?

Mr. MORSE. Oh, yes; all within the boundaries of Wisconsin.

Mr. MONDELL. How large a proportion of them are actually within the exterior boundaries of the forest reserve?

Mr. MORSE. Practically all of them; there are a few outside. They are on the headwaters of the Wisconsin River. The islands are not in the river, but in the lakes.

The CHAIRMAN. Those bodies of water constitute the watershed of that river?

Mr. MORSE. Of the Wisconsin River; yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. And the forests, whether large or small, would really constitute a part of the watershed?

Mr. MORSE. That is true.

The CHAIRMAN. And the forests, therefore, would be useful in obtaining and retaining the waters up there?

Mr. MORSE. They are doing that now by the building of retention dams. This map [indicating] will give you a very good idea of the number of lakes in that region. Those that are marked with crosses are now owned by the State of Wisconsin. This is Vilas County.

Mr. RAKER. You do not hold water back for irrigation?

Mr. MORSE. Oh, no; for water-power purposes. We have several very large dams on the Wisconsin River.

Now, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Griffith can state this matter more plainly and clearly than I can. I would like you to have it from him.

Mr. RAKER. Will you let me ask this question first? If these islands are controlled as they are now and are used by private individuals, would it prevent in any way the holding back of water? In other words, would their use of the islands in any way affect the quantity or amount of water held back for water-power purposes?

Mr. MORSE. The question always arises with regard to the water rights of the island—flowage rights—and the State would have to purchase that—

Mr. RAKER. What I mean is, is there any project on foot involving any of those islands which requires a damming up of the outlet of the lakes and thereby flooding the islands?

Mr. MORSE. I would like to have Mr. Griffith answer that.

STATEMENT OF MR. GRIFFITH, STATE FORESTER OF WISCONSIN.

Mr. GRIFFITH. I would say in reply to that specific question, Mr. Raker, that in these two counties, Vilas and Forest Counties, we can not begin to show all the lakes. The State is encouraging the development of the storage reservoirs, under careful State supervision. The Wisconsin River rises in Lake Beau de Soir. These lakes all flow to the Wisconsin River.

Mr. GEORGE. Will you please trace the rivers on the map?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Here is the Wisconsin River. It rises up here in Lake Beau de Soir. It flows round through Big Twin, through here this way, and down this way [indicating]. It winds about a good deal in its head waters, and then goes straight through the State.

Mr. GEORGE. Do those two counties lie side by side?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir; this is one map. This [indicating] is the Michigan line. These are the northern counties of Wisconsin. All these lakes [indicating] flow to the Chippewa River.

Mr. GODWIN. Are all the islands shown?

Mr. GRIFFITH. No, sir; we can not begin to show all the islands. They average only a little more than 2 acres.

Mr. GODWIN. Are they ever submerged?

Mr. GRIFFITH. No; not at the present time. Here are the headwaters of the Chippewa. The State is prohibited from entering into work of permanent improvement, and therefore can not build dams to improve stream flows. Therefore, in 1907 the State passed a law allowing a private company to go to work and put dams across many of these lakes and use them as reservoirs, and that is the most carefully drawn law that I know of. The supervision is all in the State. Our board, the State board of forestry, first passes upon whether a dam can be built, and if so, its height and the time when water can be drawn off, and we establish monuments on the sides of the lake showing the heights to which water can be raised or lowered. In the summer time our lakes are frequented by many people who own camps, and we do not want the reservoirs to destroy the beauty of the lake for resort purposes. There is a provision in the law that the State can take over everything for which it has constitutional power.

Mr. GEORGE. What consideration comes to the State for this privilege?

Mr. GRIFFITH. There is no consideration. The State feels at the present time that through the improvement of its water powers it gets indirectly a large return, but in view of the constitutional restriction it can not take over these reservoirs, and it simply gets the increased value of the physical property.

Mr. RAKER. By virtue of the right which the State has given this company to dam up these lakes, has there been any provision in the

law or constitution by which it can regulate the price charged by these companies?

MR. GRIFFITH. Oh, yes; the control of the State is dual, you might say. Our board controls all field matters—the height of the dam, the extent to which the water shall be drawn off, the levels, and so forth. Then our railroad rate commission, which is also our public utilities commission, passes upon the capitalization of the company. The capitalization can only be the money actually expended in building dams. The tolls they charge for the use of water power can only be sufficient to pay 6 per cent upon the capital invested. It is rather a unique piece of legislation. It is a case of a private company operating these reservoirs under State control.

MR. GEORGE. The State does not do this itself because of the constitutional limitation?

MR. GRIFFITH. Yes.

MR. GEORGE. Is there any specific time during which that corporation shall have charge, or is it indefinite?

MR. GRIFFITH. It is indefinite and depends only on whether the constitution can be changed.

MR. GEORGE. If the constitution is never changed, then its rights are perpetual?

MR. PICKETT. Six per cent is its gross profit?

MR. GRIFFITH. Six per cent upon the capital actually paid in.

MR. MONDELL. Are other individuals or corporations prohibited from developing water power in your State?

MR. GRIFFITH. Oh, no; this has nothing to do with the water power—

MR. MONDELL. Developing water power by storage?

MR. GRIFFITH. These reservoirs will not develop any water power, because as a rule the dams are not over 3 or 4 feet high.

MR. MONDELL. I will put my question a little differently. Are individuals and other corporations prohibited in your State from raising the levels of any of these lakes?

MR. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir; that is, the Wisconsin Valley Improvement Co. got a franchise to control and operate all the reservoirs upon the Wisconsin River north of Town 33—the exclusive right.

MR. MONDELL. That does not prohibit others in other parts of the State?

MR. GRIFFITH. Oh, no. At this last session of the legislature a law was passed allowing the Wisconsin Valley Improvement Co. to do the same thing.

MR. RAKER. Do I understand that cuts out anybody else from going in there to do any private work except these two?

MR. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

MR. RAKER. In other words, those two that have been granted the exclusive right to handle it and no one else can participate in further development?

MR. MORSE. Let me suggest that some of the State officers are ex officio members of the board of directors of that corporation.

MR. GRIFFITH. No, Mr. Morse; they are not.

MR. MORSE. What control has the State over those two corporations?

MR. GRIFFITH. The State board of forestry has absolute control over the building of any dams. They pass upon the construction of

the dam, its height, and so forth, and have absolute control in regard to all field matters.

Mr. RAKER. Are many of these lakes navigable?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir; we have long navigable chains through those lakes and rivers. You can go by canoe for several hundreds of miles.

Mr. RAKER. Are any of them now navigable lakes?

Mr. GRIFFITH. They are all navigable for pleasure craft. There is no real navigation or commerce there.

Mr. GEORGE. All these lakes are public water?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes.

Mr. GEORGE. But in the case of private lakes—there are some private lakes there are there not?

Mr. GRIFFITH. I know of only one in that country, where a party, I think, owns all the shore line and can control the lake, although I think our courts have held that they can go up through the stream in a boat and go into the lake.

Mr. FERRIS. I would like to ask three or four questions. You are the State forester, I believe?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. FERRIS. I believe it was stated by you that these lands that are “x-ed” on the map are now State lands.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. FERRIS. Will you please tell us the total acreage of the lands now owned by the State?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Four hundred and seventy-five thousand acres within the forest reserve.

Mr. FERRIS. The lands “x-ed” then are the forestry lands of the State, and they aggregate 475,000?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Well, there are a few outside, not shown on the map, but practically 475,000 acres.

Mr. FERRIS. Your bill only involves 467 acres of land?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. FERRIS. And that consists of 216 islands?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. FERRIS. Did you state that nonownership of these 216 islands by the State interfered with the operations of the forestry service in that State as you desire to operate it?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir. Mr. Morse made that statement.

Mr. FERRIS. Mr. Morse, I think it was, stated that some of these islands were occupied by undesirable resorts; used for undesirable purposes. Do they occupy those islands by reason of any lease?

Mr. GRIFFITH. No; they have taken them up on Government scrip.

Mr. FERRIS. That was the point I wanted to get at. What would be the result of passing a bill granting those 467 acres of land if there are vested rights that are attached there? What troubles would you get into?

Mr. GRIFFITH. We do not propose to include any of those islands which they have taken up. Those are islands which are now surveyed.

Mr. GODWIN. Who owns the lakes? Where is the fee to the lakes; in the National Government or in the State?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Well, as I understand that, a lake which is not suitable for commerce is owned by the State.

Mr. GODWIN. If it is a navigable stream it is owned by the Government?

The CHAIRMAN. The Government may own the use of the water without owning the lake. The right of navigation does not involve ownership.

Mr. RAKER. Can you tell me whether or not the State has determined it owned those islands within those nonnavigable lakes where it owned all lands on the border, and the Government had no control of selling them afterwards; in other words, that they were in the case of private individuals owning land surrounding the lakes? Is that the law in Wisconsin?

Mr. MORSE. Our court has held the reverse.

Mr. MONDELL. These are all meandered lakes?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir; all meandered lakes.

Mr. MONDELL. It is the law that any lake within meander lines above water remains in the hands of the General Government until disposed of.

Mr. RAKER. Provided the lake is nonnavigable. If it is nonnavigable, notwithstanding the meander lines, the water goes to the individual that owns the land around the lake.

Mr. MONDELL. Not if it is meandered, because the Government only parts with its title to the meander line.

Mr. VOLSTEAD. That is not the law in the Eastern States.

Mr. RAKER. Our courts have held contrary to that.

Mr. FERRIS. Of the 467 acres, all of that, as I understand it, is unappropriated land.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, all unappropriated.

Mr. FERRIS. What per cent of the islands have already been appropriated by the filing of script and other forms of entry and segregation?

Mr. GRIFFITH. I do not understand you definitely.

Mr. FERRIS. A larger or smaller amount—

Mr. GRIFFITH. Very much smaller.

Mr. FERRIS. Are the islands being taken up pretty rapidly now?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes.

Mr. TAYLOR. I think it would be well to let the gentleman make a statement and not interrupt him.

Mr. GRIFFITH. As Mr. Morse says, this bill has been pending for three years. We started in to build up this company in 1905 with only 40,000 acres. The State, by purchase and selling off its own State lands, has increased that to 475,000 acres. Our intention is to increase that eventually to 1,500,000 acres. These islands are unsurveyed. A few years ago we found that certain parties, particularly some men from Chicago, were taking up these islands by script. These are little rocky knolls, averaging only about 2 acres to the island. Most of them are not a half or a quarter of an acre. They are very beautiful, and many of them are covered with pine or hemlock. These men would go in and strip that timber off in the winter time, and then they would sell them to almost anybody they could get to purchase. There is a great inclination while the lumber men are up in this country to locate saloons or get people in there who are very undesirable. Consequently President Van Heise, of the University of Wisconsin, who is chairman of the board, and myself took the matter up with Mr. Garfield, then Secretary of the Interior, and explained the matter. After the matter was investigated somewhat

Mr. Garfield withdrew those lands from entry, pending final consideration of Congressman Morse's bill. There was no action taken upon the bill at that time. That action was continued under Secretary Ballinger until toward the end of his administration, and then those islands were again placed upon the market, and some 8 or 10 of the best of them were quickly snapped up. They are being surveyed slowly. We have again taken the matter up with Secretary Fisher and Congressman Morse, who introduced the bill, and that is the reason we are so extremely anxious to get this bill passed so we can protect these islands.

We are leasing land around these lakes and such islands as we own for people who want them for summer camps—not only people of Wisconsin, but of the whole Mississippi Valley. People come there from as far south as New Orleans, and many of them from Kansas City, Chicago, and St. Louis. We are leasing upon reasonable terms and with certain restrictions any particular land around our lakes. We would, of course, handle these islands in exactly the same way. This is not a question, gentlemen, of giving us any amount of land for the timber that is on it, but the improvement of those islands from the esthetic point of view.

In connection with the control of those reservoirs, there are established monuments on the shore line of the lake. We have a hydraulic engineer who takes those matters up with all of the resort owners, and of course we have to fix a mean that will suit the storage men. The storage men would like to draw that water down as low as they can and fill the lakes as high as they can. The resort owner would like to get a fluctuation of not more than 10 inches. That keeps down the thoroughfares between those lakes which you can go through by launch or canoe. If these islands are taken up by private individuals, it will interfere very largely with the joint handling of those lakes both for reservoir purposes and for resort purposes as well.

MR. GODWIN. How do they purchase the timber; from whom?

MR. GRIFFITH. They pay scrip upon the island; but of course as soon as the land is patented to them the timber is theirs.

MR. GODWIN. I understand that you purchased a little of that land there that is "x-ed."

MR. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

MR. GODWIN. Why is it, then, that you are not willing to purchase the islands in the lakes?

MR. GRIFFITH. I think that the United States Government has a very great interest in this work we are doing at the headwaters of these rivers. Some years ago—it was back in the nineties—the United States engineers made a survey of this region and also of the headwaters of the Mississippi in Minnesota. They reported—you will find this in the reports of the War Department—that this region and that at the headwaters of the Mississippi were two of the greatest storage reservoir regions in the United States, and if the water in these lakes could be controlled so that they would catch all those flood waters, it would make a great difference in the valley of the Mississippi and the damage done by floods. Congress went ahead and built some storage dams on the Mississippi River, but nothing was done in Wisconsin at that time. The Government, showing its interest in that, has reserved to itself all those lands—the right of flowage. In other words, they could go in and overflow those lands.

Now, the State, through this company, is going ahead and doing that at the present time. A few years ago the Government, showing its interest in this, granted to us 20,000 acres in this same region.

Mr. GODWIN. Have these islands any financial value?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. GODWIN. What is that?

Mr. GRIFFITH. That is a difficult thing to say.

Mr. TAYLOR. Is there any cultivable land in there?

Mr. GRIFFITH. No, sir; it is not a farming proposition at all.

The CHAIRMAN. This bill has been referred to the department, but no report has yet been made by the department on it.

Mr. MONDELL. There are 216 islands, I think you said, involved?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. MONDELL. Having a total acreage of something like 400 acres?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Four hundred and sixty-seven acres.

Mr. MONDELL. They are unsurveyed?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. MONDELL. They can now be disposed of. Does the timber and stone act apply to Wisconsin?

Mr. MORSE. It does.

Mr. MONDELL. At \$2.50 an acre under the timber and stone act, if that is true.

Mr. TAYLOR. If Garfield's withdrawal was revoked.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Garfield withdrew them, and Mr. Ballinger withdrew them. I am not certain as to Mr. Fisher.

Mr. MONDELL. They were disposed of for years at \$2.50 an acre. They could also be secured under the lieu-land law, under which the Government receives nothing at all for the lands.

Mr. GRIFFITH. That is true.

Mr. MONDELL. Many of them were so taken. The probability is that if they were now relieved from withdrawal the Government would either get \$2.50 an acre for them or would get nothing for them if they were taken as scrip. It is also true, is it not, that the intending purchaser in every case can call upon the Federal Government to survey the lands?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. MONDELL. And the cost of the surveys in every case is very much more than the Federal Government would get under existing law from the lands?

Mr. GRIFFITH. I am not familiar with the law as to whether the Government pays that or not.

Mr. MONDELL. Oh, yes; the Government pays for all surveys.

Mr. GRIFFITH. It would cost much more to survey those islands than you would probably get out of them.

Mr. MONDELL. Therefore, the Federal Government stands to lose on this property if it disposes of it?

Mr. GEORGE. Otherwise than in this way.

Mr. MONDELL. Otherwise than in this way. In this way we are turning it over to the State for very excellent purposes.

Mr. FERRIS. Is it not true, if the State of Wisconsin really needs those islands in order to make its forestry project a success—is not the Federal Government ducking an expense to give the land to them and let them have it? Isn't it a benefit to the Federal Government rather than a detriment?

Mr. MONDELL. I think there is no question, unless we modify the law. The present withdrawal, however, is not a legal withdrawal. I know of nothing in the withdrawal act that would authorize the withdrawal of these lands. It is perhaps a very proper exercise of arbitrary power, but if the withdrawal were not in force, then the Federal Government would stand to lose on every sale it made of these lands, and the proposition is to get rid of them without expense and turn them over to the State of Wisconsin to take care of.

Mr. GRIFFITH. We would be delighted to pay \$2.50 an acre for them.

Mr. MONDELL. But in that event the Federal Government would be called upon to survey 216 islands running all the way from a third of an acre to 30 acres, which would cost very much more than \$2.50 an acre; probably in the neighborhood of \$10 an acre.

Mr. GRIFFITH. It would be expensive work.

Mr. FERRIS. Does the Agricultural Department think that the granting of these islands to you would in any way interfere with their forestry projects?

Mr. GRIFFITH. No, sir; they have no forestry projects up there; none at all. There is no more Government land left in these counties.

Mr. FERRIS. Is there any Federal forestry reserve in your State at all?

Mr. GRIFFITH. No, sir; we run it all ourselves.

Mr. FERRIS. At State expense?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Absolutely.

Mr. MONDELL. Let me ask one more question with regard to the terms of the bill. You say you propose to guard and care for and protect these islands, and in all probability in some instances you will lease them, as you are leasing the adjacent lands for summer cottages, which seems to be a proper use. Do you think you could lease them under the provisions of this bill:

These lands hereby granted shall be used as additions to the forest reserves only, and should the State of Wisconsin abandon the use of said islands for such purpose, alienate, or attempt to alienate, or use the same or any part thereof for purposes other than that for which granted.

The use as a summer home is hardly a forestry use, is it?

Mr. GRIFFITH. In our State law it is provided that we can use them in that way.

Mr. MONDELL. You are willing to take chances that the Federal Government would not interfere with your use in that way? It seems to me the grant should be clear.

The CHAIRMAN. The language, Mr. Mondell, in lines 7 and 8, "as additions to the State forest reserves," when construed in connection with the language you read, would probably mean that such use could be made of them as might lawfully be made of the Wisconsin forest reserves. And if the law, as Mr. Griffith says, provides that they may be used for pleasure-resort purposes, I take it that these might also be.

Mr. MONDELL. At least, I doubt that there would be any question between the Federal Government and the State of Wisconsin.

The CHAIRMAN. How old is your forestry bureau?

Mr. GRIFFITH. The first law was passed in 1904. Our first real forestry law was in 1905.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it operated at a loss to the State?

Mr. GRIFFITH. It works this way: All our revenues that we get from the sale of timber, and so forth, go into a forest-reserve fund, and that fund draws interest from the treasury, and that fund can be used only for the purchase of more lands and for their improvement and protection. You see, we are striving to get a reserve of 1,500,000 acres. We started with 40,000 acres in 1905, and we have now nearly 500,000 acres. All this money goes right back into the purchase of more lands. But we are taking in more than we are expending.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there any provision for the application of the moneys you take in after you have obtained all the land you want?

Mr. GRIFFITH. No; the legislature thought they had better wait for that. We expect eventually to have to return to the State from \$1 to \$2 an acre.

The CHAIRMAN. Have you any other source of income than the sale of timber?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir; quite a good deal from the lease of these lands for camping purposes.

Mr. GODWIN. What does the department say about this?

The CHAIRMAN. I have just stated that the bill was referred to the department but that no report has been received.

Mr. MORSE. You will find the report of the department here; it is very favorable.

Mr. TAYLOR. It has been favorable all along?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Oh, yes.

Mr. MONDELL. My only reason for not reporting this bill favorably would be that Wisconsin, while taking these islands off our hands, might take some other lands at the same time.

Mr. MORSE. That has been the difficulty every time. The Federal Government has a few forests in the State of Wisconsin—I think a few thousand acres, that report will show what they own. The committee has each time suggested that the State of Wisconsin take the rest of that Federal land and use it for a forest reserve, and in that way get rid of that land. We were perfectly willing to take that, but as soon as it was suggested that the State of Wisconsin take that Federal land somebody else in another State said, "Let us take the Federal land in our State," and somebody in another State said, "Let us take the Federal land in our State," and the trouble with this bill has been that it grew so fast it could not be passed. If we can confine it simply to those islands and not take any more of the land, the gentlemen from the other States will not insist upon their taking land.

Mr. RAKER. This is a special matter relating to Wisconsin, is it not?

Mr. MORSE. Yes, sir.

Mr. RAKER. Let me ask you just a few questions on that. It would not relate to the general policy of the Government in another State?

Mr. MORSE. No, sir; not at all.

Mr. RAKER. I understand there are about 8,000 acres in all that the Government owns in the entire State?

Mr. MORSE. Yes, sir.

Mr. RAKER. How many land offices are there now maintained in that State?

Mr. MORSE. One at Wausau. I think there are two; I know of one.

Mr. RAKER. Now, if this land were turned over to the State of Wisconsin, under the same regulation as is asked*for by this bill, it would eliminate all of the public land offices in the State of Wisconsin?

Mr. MORSE. That is true.

Mr. RAKER. Couldn't the State take the rest of this land under the same condition as provided in this bill?

Mr. MORSE. Certainly it could, but just as soon as Wisconsin does that, Minnesota, Wyoming, Missouri, and the other States would want to do the same.

Mr. RAKER. That ought not to defeat the bill.

Mr. MORSE. It has done so.

Mr. RAKER. I know; but the question before this committee and what we ought to act on—we ought to take each individual case and pass upon it and determine whether it is valuable or not. Now, before I quit, I want to switch off on another matter. I notice you have a statement there in your hand. Does that contain the location in the township and the section of each of these islands?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. RAKER. Would it not require under this bill a survey by the Government as to these islands so they could be definitely put into the patent that the Government would issue?

Mr. GRIFFITH. I do not so understand; no, sir. If you grant to us all the remaining islands we would get everything there is.

Mr. MONDELL. Let me make this suggestion: I had in mind when the time came to report the bill to change its form. I think in the form the bill now stands it is subject to the objection you suggest. If the committee wants to grant this land, they should grant it. In the form in which the bill now stands the Secretary of the Interior can not well issue a patent to lands that have not been definitely located and surveyed, but Congress can grant lands by prescription. We certainly do not want to go to the expense of surveying.

Mr. RAKER. How can you obviate the latter provision of this act?

Mr. MONDELL. Personally I have no sympathy with the latter provision. I say that if the sovereign State of Wisconsin will take these little dinky islands in these lakes she ought to have them, and Congress ought not to place any restriction on them. I think it is a mighty good bill. If I were to write the bill, I would say, "The unsurveyed islands in the State of Wisconsin are hereby granted to the Commonwealth."

Mr. GEORGE. How would you describe them?

Mr. MONDELL. As unsurveyed lands.

Mr. MORSE. The State of Wisconsin has out of its own funds purchased 455,000 acres. We are policing that, taking care of that. We have not asked the Federal Government to come in there and establish forest reserves for us. The actual money value of this is almost nothing.

Mr. TAYLOR. If some administration should come along here and revoke that withdrawal it would make those islands a nuisance to the State of Wisconsin?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir; it would.

Mr. TAYLOR. And do irreparable injury?

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there any other question involved except those you have mentioned? Is there any other possibility of property right as to minerals or other water power?

MR. GRIFFITH. Not that I have ever heard of.

The CHAIRMAN. Oil or gas?

MR. GRIFFITH. No, sir; not that we know of up there.

MR. RAKER. In this same connection, is there any question in regard to monopoly—

MR. GRIFFITH. None whatever.

MR. RAKER. That by granting this land to the State of Wisconsin the Government will thereby be deprived of its power to control those water powers in that State by this general bill?

MR. GRIFFITH. The United States would reserve the flowage rights, and I suppose if you thought it advisable you could reserve—I do not think so; those companies are absolutely under the control of the State, both as to the issuing of stocks and bonds and the raising and lowering of the water.

MR. RAKER. Under the conditions that exist now, is it your opinion that the Government, owning the islands located as they are for the purpose of developing water power if the Government so desired, would be in a position to regulate the water powers that were placed there?

MR. GRIFFITH. The Federal Government? I do not think it could.

MR. RAKER. Why not?

MR. MORSE. I do not think that the Federal Government would have any authority to regulate the water powers within the State. I may be mistaken.

The CHAIRMAN. The term "navigable water" is very broad. Where a log can be floated is navigable water.

MR. GRIFFITH. Yes, all those lakes have been held navigable.

MR. RAKER. This has not anything to do with the general proposition, but irrespective of the State of Wisconsin handling this in connection with its Forest Service and the necessity of it and the good that might result, still would not the Government as it exists have the power to regulate generally in the States the water power wherever it flows in these islands?

MR. GRIFFITH. The mere granting of these islands would not affect that question.

MR. RAKER. It would eliminate the power of the Government over the land entirely.

MR. GRIFFITH. Over those islands; yes.

The CHAIRMAN. I would suggest that further action on this be postponed until the department is heard from on this bill. The committee has never fixed a regular meeting day. I think the committee should do that.

MR. GEORGE. How is it you are meeting on Wednesday, then.

The CHAIRMAN. This is a special call.

MR. VOLSTEAD. That used to be the day.

MR. MONDELL. It has been the meeting day for many years.

MR. TAYLOR. The only reason any change is suggested is by reason of the establishment of Calendar Wednesday, which makes it very inconvenient.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it your desire to take any action on a regular meeting day before we adjourn?

On motion duly seconded, it was ordered that Wednesday be made the regular meeting day of the committee.

Mr. MORSE. I would like, Mr. Chairman, to file indorsements of this bill from all of our State officers.

The letters referred to are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, January 15, 1912.

Hon. JOSEPH T. ROBINSON,
Chairman Committee on the Public Lands,
House of Representatives.

SIR: I am in receipt of your favor of January 8, 1912, requesting a report on H. R. 13417, which directs the issuance of patent to the State of Wisconsin for all "unsurveyed and unattached islands in inland lakes north of the township line between townships 33 and 34, fourth principal meridian, as additions to the State for forest purposes."

In reply, I have the honor to inform you that the records of this department do not disclose either the area or the location of the islands mentioned. The exterior boundaries of navigable inland lakes have been meandered and marked on the plats of public-land surveys, but none of the islands have been surveyed. I can not, therefore, give you any information from the records here as to either the number or the area of these islands, but a communication addressed to this department by Mr. E. M. Griffith, State forester for Wisconsin, says that a report of an examination made by his forest rangers shows that there are 216 islands, averaging a little over two acres each and approximating a total area of 467 acres. I am inclosing herewith a statement showing the number and approximate area and approximate location of the islands said to be affected by this bill, which was furnished to this department by State Forester Griffith.

This bill directs the issuance of patents to the State for the islands mentioned, and your attention is called to the fact that such patents can not be issued until after surveys are made and the lands identified in place, which would, in view of the large number of islands, entail quite a large expense. Since the same purpose can be accomplished by a specific grant to the State, it is respectfully suggested that all of the words in lines 3 and 4 after the word "that" in line 3 be stricken out, and that the words "be and the same are hereby granted to the State of Wisconsin," be inserted after the word "meridian" in line 7 of the bill.

While the records of this department do not afford any definite information which would be of assistance to your committee, the object of the bill seems to be a laudable one, and the Government could well afford to donate these lands to the purposes indicated since it would cost more to survey the islands than could be realized from them if they were disposed of under the present public-land laws. I know of no reason why the bill should not be enacted.

Very respectfully,

SAMUEL ADAMS,
Acting Secretary.

List of islands, nearly all of which are unsurveyed, within the State forest reserve region in northern Wisconsin.

	Islands.	Average acreage.	Lake.
T. 40, R. 3 E.:			
Sec. 1.....	2	$\frac{3}{4}$	Pine Lake.
Sec. 9.....	4	$\frac{3}{4}$	(No name.)
T. 41, R. 3 E., sec. 25.....	1	$\frac{3}{4}$	Lake Martha.
T. 44, R. 4 E.:			
Sec. 19.....	1	$\frac{3}{4}$	Long Lake.
Sec. 32.....	2	$\frac{3}{4}$	Long Lake, probably.
T. 43, R. 4 E., sec. 14.....	1	$\frac{3}{4}$	Cedar Lake or Bass Lake.
	1	$\frac{3}{4}$	Do.
T. 39, R. 5 E.:			
Sec. 2.....	1	$\frac{3}{4}$	Mud Lake.
Sec. 8.....	1	$\frac{3}{4}$	Squirrel Lake.
Secs. 3 and 10.....	3	$\frac{3}{4}$	(No name) or Mud Lake.
Sec. 13.....	2	$\frac{3}{4}$	Lake Mercer.
Secs. 15 and 16.....	2	$\frac{3}{4}$	(No name.)
Sec. 19.....	1	$\frac{3}{4}$	Squirrel Lake.
T. 42, R. 5 E.:			
Sec. 4.....	2	$\frac{3}{4}$	Rest Lake.
Sec. 23.....	1	$\frac{3}{4}$	Manitowish Lake.

List of islands, nearly all of which are unsurveyed, within the State forest reserve region in northern Wisconsin—Continued.

	Islands.	Average acreage.	Lake.
T. 43, R. 5 E.:			
Sec. 8.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	South Turtle Lake.
Sec. 17.....	1	1	Do.
Sec. 25.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Papoose Lake or (no name).
T. 44, R. 5 E.:			
Secs. 19 and 30.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	(No name.)
Sec. 30.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Secs. 29 and 30.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 26.....	1	1	Harris Lake.
T. 38, R. 6 E.:			
Sec. 10.....	3	1	Brown Lake, probably.
Sec. 11.....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	Brown Lake.
T. 39, R. 6 E.:			
Sec. 11.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Minocqua Lake.
Sec. 12.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 13.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 15.....	2	1	Kawagagesaga Lake.
Secs. 11 and 12.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Minocqua Lake.
Sec. 13.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 14.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 15.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Kawagagesaga Lake.
Sec. 16.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Secs. 28 and 29.....	1	38	Rusk Lake.
Secs. 25 and 36.....	11	-----	Tomahawk Lake.
Sec. 16.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Kawagagesaga Lake.
T. 40, R. 6 E.:			
Sec. 4.....	1	38	Devine Lake.
Sec. 10.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	(No name) or Lake Gaffery.
Sec. 13.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	(No name.)
T. 41, R. 6 E.:			
Sec. 4.....	1	1	(No name) or Gresham Lake.
Sec. 13.....	1	10	Trout Lake.
Sec. 24.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 13.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Trout Lake or Silver Lake.
T. 42, R. 6 E.:			
Sec. 18.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Island Lake.
Sec. 18.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 18.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 27.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	(No name.)
Sec. 26.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
T. 43, R. 6 E.:			
Sec. 9.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Presque Isle Lake.
Sec. 12.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Lake Anna.
Sec. 12.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 13.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Lake Anna or (no name).
Sec. 13.....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 13.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 14.....	13	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 19.....	1	3	Crab Lake or (no name).
Sec. 21.....	1	3	Papoose Lake or possibly Katinka 1.
Sec. 21.....	1	2	Presque Isle Lake.
Sec. 21.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 22.....	7	$\frac{1}{2}$	Crab Lake.
Sec. 23.....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 30.....	1	2	Papoose Lake or (no name).
Sec. 32.....	1	13	Big Lake.
Sec. 18.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Presque Isle Lake.
T. 38, R. 7 E.:			
Sec. 5.....	1	3	Tomahawk Lake.
Sec. 5.....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 14.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Horse Head Lake.
Sec. 16.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	North Two Lakes or South Two Lakes.
Sec. 23.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Horse Head Lake or (no name).
T. 39, R. 7 E.:			
Sec. 4.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Carroll Lake.
Sec. 5.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	(No name) or Carroll Lake.
Sec. 15.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Clear Lake or (no name) or Huff 1.
Sec. 16.....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	Clear Lake or (no name).
Sec. 26.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Wentzel Lake.
T. 40, R. 7 E., sec. 15.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	(No name.)

List of islands, nearly all of which are unsurveyed, within the State forest reserve region in northern Wisconsin—Continued.

	Islands.	Average acreage.	Lake.
T. 41, R. 7 E.:			
Sec. 7.....	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	Trout Lake.
Sec. 9.....	2	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 11.....	1	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	Horse Head Lake.
Sec. 16.....	1	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	Lake Nebish.
Sec. 20.....	3	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	Horse Head Lake.
Sec. 27.....	1	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	(No name) or Trout Lake.
Sec. 28.....	1	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	(No name) or Big Muscallonge.
Sec. 29.....	1	3	Do.
Sec. 31.....	1	3	(No name.)
Sec. 32.....	2	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	Rock Lake.
T. 42, R. 7 E.:			
Sec. 2.....	2	2	(No name) or Fishtrap Lake.
Sec. 17.....	2	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	Boulder Lake or Rice Lake.
Sec. 34.....	3	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	Lost Canoe Lake or Clear Lake or possibly White Sand Lake.
T. 43, R. 7 E.:			
Sec. 6.....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	Ox Bow Lake or Aimer Lake.
Secs. 10 and 11.....	2	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	Twin Island Lake.
Secs. 18 and 19.....	1	10	Lynx Lake.
Secs. 13 and 24.....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Secs. 27 and 28.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Boggy Mans Lake.
Sec. 27.....	1	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	Wildcat Lake.
Sec. 28.....	2	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	Wildcat Lake, probably, or (no name).
Sec. 33.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Wildcat Lake.
Sec. 33.....	1	2	Do.
T. 40, R. 8 E.:			
Sec. 14.....	1	2	Found Lake.
Sec. 20.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Lake St. Germain.
T. 41, R. 8 E.:			
Sec. 2.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Irving Lake, probably.
Sec. 4.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Ballard Lake.
Sec. 16.....	1	4	Star Lake.
Sec. 19.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 20.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Rice Lake.
Sec. 22.....	3	1	Razor Back Lake.
Sec. 23.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Star Lake.
Sec. 28.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
Sec. 29.....	1	2	Plum Lake.
Sec. 29.....	1	2	Do.
T. 42, R. 8 E., sec. 6.....	1	3	High Lake.
Sec. 6.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
T. 43, R. 8 E.:			
Sec. 8.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Tenderfoot Lak
Sec. 20.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Corrine Lake
T. 41, R. 9 E.:			
Sec. 22.....	5	-----	Buckatabon Lake.
Sec. 23.....	1	-----	Do.
T. 38, R. 10 E.:			
Sec. 14.....	1	30	Thunder Lake.
Sec. 15.....	1	10	Do.
T. 39, R. 10 E., sec. 2.....	1	2	Catfish Lake.
Sec. 2.....	1	2	Do.
Sec. 5.....	1	1	Do.
Sec. 24.....	1	5	Scattering Rice Lake.
T. 40, R. 10 E., sec. 24.....			
T. 41, R. 10 E.:			
Sec. 23.....	1	3	Pioneer Lake.
Sec. 35.....	1	2	Bass Lake.
T. 39, R. 11 E., sec. 6.....	1	70	South Bay Cranberry Lake.
T. 40, R. 11 E.:			
Sec. 6.....	1	3	Deer Skin Lake.
Sec. 17.....	1	1	Carpenter Lake.
Sec. 31.....	1	50	Cranberry Lake.
Sec. 31.....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Cranberry Lake (island in thoroughfare).
T. 41, R. 11 E.:			
Sec. 8.....	1	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	North Twin Lake.
Sec. 17.....	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	Do.
T. 42, R. 11 E.:			
Secs. 10 and 11.....	1	26.33	Lake Vieux Desert.
Sec. 25.....	1	1	(No name)
T. 40, R. 12 E., sec. 20.....	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	Franklin Lake
	216	467	

WISCONSIN-TAX COMMISSION,
Madison, January 20, 1910.

Hon. E. A. MORSE,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR: As a former resident of your district, permit me to say that I fully approve your bill, granting unsurveyed and unattached islands to the State of Wisconsin for forestry purposes, and sincerely hope you will be able to secure its passage.

I am not fully informed as to how many there may be of these islands, but think there must be quite a number of them altogether. They are mostly in the lakes of the region in which the State is developing its principal forest reserve, and certainly should belong to the State to become a part of such reserve instead of passing into private ownership, as I believe they may (and some already have) under existing laws. Such islands, being small isolated tracts, can never bring to the Federal Government any considerable amount if offered for sale. The best possible disposition which can be made of these islands is that provided for in your bill.

Respectfully,

GEO. CURTIS, Jr.

MADISON, WIS., January 20, 1910.

Hon. E. A. MORSE, *Washington, D. C.*

DEAR SIR: I understand House bill 17544, introduced by you, has been referred to the Committee on the Public Lands. I can see no objection to this bill, and there are so many features to recommend it that I hope you may be able to secure its passage and secure for the State land that ought by right to belong to it. If I can serve you in any way, by any further communication, trust you will draw upon me.

Wishing you success in securing the passage of the bill, I am,

Very truly, yours,

J. A. FREAR, *Secretary of State.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN,
Madison, January 21, 1910.

MY DEAR CONGRESSMAN MORSE: I note that you have introduced House bill 17544, providing for a grant to the State of Wisconsin of unsurveyed and unattached islands in the inland lakes north of township 33 and 34 in Wisconsin, with the condition that they be attached to the State forest reserve.

As you are aware we are attempting to develop a forest reserve on the headwaters of the chief tributaries of the Mississippi in Wisconsin. Already the State has acquired several hundred thousand acres for this purpose. This forest reserve is in the area in which the islands referred to are located; it is important that they become a part of this reserve. While the State forest reserve has been planned by the State primarily with reference to Wisconsin, there is no question that its maintenance and extension will be advantageous to the United States, since the forest reserves and the stream flow are closely connected. In the State of Wisconsin are several important rivers, especially the Wisconsin and the Chippewa, which flow into the Mississippi. The maintenance of a uniform flow upon these streams will be one factor in the promotion of uniform flow in the Mississippi, and therefore in maintaining favorable conditions for navigation. Thus it is clear that the United States as well as the State is interested in the extension of the forest reserve in Wisconsin, and this seems a sufficient reason why the bill proposed by you should become a law.

Very truly, yours,

CHARLES R. VAN HISE.

Congressman E. A. MORSE.

WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE,
Oshkosh, Wis., January 25, 1910.

Hon. E. A. MORSE,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR: Inclosed you will please find copy of letter I have just received from Mr. Griffith, our State forester. As you know, Mr. Griffith is absolutely reliable, public spirited, looking out for the best interests of the State, and knows what he is talking about. Anything that you may be able to do to further his plans I am sure will be very acceptable to the people of your district and to the people of the State at large. Presently I know nothing in particular about the merits of the bill he advo-

cates, aside from what he says in his letter, but I do know that Mr. Griffith understands the situation and knows the needs of the State, and would not advocate any measure that was not meritorious and just to the State.

Yours, truly,

WM. M. BRAY.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN,
Madison, Wis., January 25, 1910.

Congressman E. A. MORSE,
Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR SIR: Your bill introduced (H. R. 17544), relative to the assignment of unsurveyed and unattached islands in Wisconsin for forestry purposes, comes to my attention, and inasmuch as the purpose of this will be to improve the conditions with reference to forestry in this State, as well as to eliminate the possibility of these islands falling into the hands of private owners, in the midst of the forest reserves, I am heartily in favor of the bill and trust you may be able to secure its passage at the next session of Congress.

Yours, truly,

H. L. RUSSELL.

WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE,
Madison, January 26, 1910.

Hon. E. A. MORSE, Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR: I am deeply interested in a bill now pending in Congress withdrawing from entry the unsurveyed islands in our inland lakes north of town 33 in our State—nor am I alone thus interested, but every citizen of the State who is familiar with the existing conditions has a similar interest.

The State already owns the larger part of the lands surrounding these lakes, and is acquiring more of such land as fast as possible—all of which is for a State forest reserve.

The main purposes of this forest reserve are to grow timber for promoting our industries—to cover the sources of our rivers, in order to promote a more uniform flow, thus aiding in the prevention of destructive and excessive floods as well as the long periods of low water—in improving navigation for small crafts and forest products—also in the propagation of fish—but besides these purposes, which are generally understood, there is a further reason which the people generally do not, as yet, know much about.

I refer to the income to our people from tourists. More and more are the people from warmer sections of the country making annual-trips to the more northerly and cooler places. Some of our New England States, where the attractions have become known, receive over \$10,000,000 each year from this source.

In the northern part of our State are more than 1,500 lakes of every imaginable shape and size, of clear pure water, and which are now, to some extent, surrounded by growing and beautiful forests. Under State management, these forests will be propagated and enlarged, to take the place of the cut-over and burned sections, until the entire lake region will, not many years hence, present a diversity of forest and lake scenery unexcelled anywhere. Boating in these lakes and through the connecting "thoroughfares" has attractions with which larger bodies of water, subject to storms, can not compare, while hunting and fishing will be of the very best. The State forestry board is now arranging for leasing small pieces of land, at a nominal rent and for a term of years, when desired, for the building of summer cottages.

As soon as the conditions are further advanced and the facts become generally known, it requires no prophet to see the vast number of tourists that will visit our State and the large amount of money that will be circulated to our people as a result.

Now, one factor in this development is the ownership of the islands, mostly small, that are situated within these lakes. In the hands of private owners the timber on these islands will be cut off in the usual devastating style of the lumberman, fire will follow, so that instead of beauty spots these will become a blot and blemish in the landscape. The rental of summer cottage sites on these islands will be prevented. The beauty and attractiveness of the region will be greatly marred. It is probable that the ownership of the islands is being sought by individuals, in many cases, in order that the State may be compelled to buy them later in order to be rid of a nuisance. Anyhow there must be some motive, and as a rule these isolated islands are of no practical value to an individual, while to the State, which owns surrounding lands, and on the ground of attractive scenery, they are of great value.

On some of these islands, I understand, there is a limited amount of timber. If owned by the State, this would be cut at proper times under forestry regulation, which will prevent unsightly débris, forest fires, or entirely denuding the surface.

I greatly hope that you will succeed in securing the passage of the bill preventing these lands being entered by scrip, but secured to the State instead. If I can be of service whatever is this matter, it will be a pleasure to render such help.

I am, yours, very respectfully,

H. P. BIRD,
Chairman State Forestry Committee.

MADISON, WIS., January 27, 1910.

HON. E. A. MORSE,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. MORSE: I wish to express my hearty approval of bill (H. R. 17544) introduced by you for "granting unsurveyed and unattached islands to the State of Wisconsin for forestry purposes."

I believe this is a very good bill and sincerely trust the bill will pass.

Wishing you success in this matter and thanking you for your interest in behalf of the forest reserve of this State, I am,

Very truly, yours,

A. H. DAHL, *State Treasurer.*

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Madison, Wis., January 27, 1910.

MY DEAR MR. MORSE: My attention has been called to the bill introduced by you in the House of Representatives to grant the unsurveyed and unattached islands in inland lakes, north of township 33, to the State of Wisconsin, as additions to the State forest reserves.

This measure was first considered some two years ago, when it was found that land speculators were placing scrip upon these islands, and when the matter was called to the attention of the Secretary of the Interior he withdrew all these islands from entry pending consideration by Congress of your bill. The State of Wisconsin has now built up a forest reserve of 324,000 acres, and we are consolidating the main forest reserve upon the headwaters of the Wisconsin and Chippewa Rivers, which are important tributaries of the Mississippi. We expect eventually to acquire by purchase a forest reserve of 1,500,000 to 2,000,000 acres in this region, and the effect of these reserves will be to regulate the flow of the rivers, thereby preventing to a very considerable extent the disastrous floods upon the Mississippi, which is a question not alone of State, but of national importance.

In northern Wisconsin there are some 1,500 beautiful inland lakes, which are already becoming more attractive to the people of the whole Mississippi Valley as summer resorts. If your bill passes and the State receives patent to the small islands in these beautiful lakes, the timber upon the islands, instead of being stripped off, will be protected, and it is the policy of the State to lease camp and cottage sites, not only to the citizens of our own State, but other States as well. If, however, these islands should fall into the hands of land speculators, the timber is liable to be stripped off and the islands left in a very desolate condition. Your measure is, therefore, along the lines of truest conservation, and I trust that nothing will prevent its passage.

Yours, truly,

J. O. DAVIDSON, *Governor.*

HON. E. A. MORSE,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE,
Ompawa, Wis., January 29, 1910.

HON. E. A. MORSE, *Washington, D. C.*

DEAR MR. MORSE: Your bill (H. R. 17544) providing for the issuing of patents to the State of Wisconsin for the unsurveyed islands in inland lakes north of township line between townships 33 and 34 north of the fourth principal meridian, I believe to be a meritorious bill. These islands will be taken up by speculators who will monopolize the use of them. If they are held by the State under the forest reserve, they will be a benefit to the citizens of this State and other States and their posterity for centuries. If this had been passed years ago in this State it would have been a great benefit to the people and would have saved many beauty spots that are now withheld from the people by a few wealthy people. Last winter our State legislature appropriated \$159,000 for public parks in this State.

Yours, very truly,

EDWARD E. BROWNE.

MENOMONIE, WIS., *January 29, 1910.*Hon. E. A. MORSE, *Washington, D. C.*

DEAR SIR: I have just received, through Mr. Griffith, copy of your bill (H. R. 17544) granting unsurveyed and unattached islands to the State of Wisconsin for forestry purposes. I am heartily in favor of this measure and trust you may be able to secure its passage very soon. Can I assist you further in any way in this matter?

Yours, truly,

J. H. STOUT.

MENASHA, WIS., *February 1, 1910.*Hon. E. A. MORSE, *Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. MORSE: Your bill (H. R. 17544) for the granting of unsurveyed and unattached lands to the State of Wisconsin for forestry purposes is before me. I certainly hope that you may succeed in having this bill become a law, because of the importance of it to the forestry interests of the State of Wisconsin. Few of us have a realization of the importance of administering in every way to the propagation and protection of our forests, and at a time like this, when the public is beginning to take notice of the necessity of the curing of the sins of the past, it ought to be easy for your associates in Congress to see the wisdom of passing all such bills as the one you have introduced.

Wishing you success in this and in other good measures. I am,

Yours, truly,

JOHN STRANGE.

SUPERIOR, WIS., *February 1, 1910.*Hon. E. A. MORSE, M. C.,
Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR SIR: I understand that on January 10, 1910, you introduced House bill 17544, relating to patenting to the State of Wisconsin unsurveyed and unattached islands in inland lakes north of township line 33 as additions to State forest reserve.

As a member of the Wisconsin Senate, I have had the pleasure of voting for bills establishing a forest reserve in this same territory and withdrawing from sale all State lands thereon, as well as authorize the purchase of additional lands. Your bill ought to pass, and I sincerely hope the same will pass without serious opposition.

Very truly, yours,

GEO. B. HUDNALL.

RAILROAD COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN,
*Madison, Wis., February 14, 1910.*Mr. E. A. MORSE,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR: Our forester, Mr. Griffith, has handed me a copy of the bill (H. R. 17544) granting unsurveyed and unattached islands to the State of Wisconsin for forestry purposes. A reading of the bill, in the light of the statement of facts made to me by Mr. Griffith, impresses me that this is a measure in the public interest and deserving of approval.

Very truly, yours,

B. H. MEYER.

Thereupon, at 12.05 o'clock p. m., the committee adjourned to meet Wednesday, January 17, 1912.

